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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7655
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE 0402
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SKOPJE 000556

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STATE FOR EUR/SCE AND EUR/CARC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/15/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [RS](#) [MK](#)
SUBJECT: GEORGIA: MACEDONIA SUPPORTS GEORGIA QUIETLY, ALSO SEEKS
DIPLOMATIC TIES

Ref: STATE 91894 and previous

CLASSIFIED BY: CDA Tom Navratil for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Charge called on FonMin Milososki Sept. 3 to reinforce reftel points condemning Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and called on the GoM to make a forceful public statement to that effect. Milososki replied that "we will never recognize" these territories, and Macedonia wants to help Georgia. He reported that he had met Georgian Deputy PM Baramidze and the Georgian Speaker last week at the Democratic Convention in Denver and expressed Skopje's strong support. In addition, the three discussed establishing formal diplomatic relations as soon as possible (with Georgia recognizing Macedonia under its constitutional name). He asserted that previous Macedonian attempts over the years to establish diplomatic relations had met with lack of follow-up from Tbilisi, but he was hopeful that the two countries could exchange letters as soon as the upcoming UNGA. He added that he had instructed the Macedonian PermRep in New York and his ambassador in Washington to work with their Georgian counterparts to this end.

¶2. (C) However, Milososki demurred when we pressed for a firmer Macedonian public line, citing Macedonia's somewhat precarious position as a non-NATO member: "We cannot make strong statements like Lithuania." However, as a candidate country Macedonia has consistently joined EU statements on the crisis, will continue to do so, and will give full diplomatic support to Georgia. Milososki offered that the Russian ambassador here did not press hard for recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, no doubt realizing Macedonia's strategic orientation.

¶3. (C) Comment: Macedonia is reluctant to stick its neck out publicly on Georgia, though it may become slightly more inclined to do so once the two countries establish relations and, most importantly for Skopje, Georgia recognizes Macedonia under its constitutional name. While we cannot evaluate the GoG's equities, it seems that Georgia and Macedonia establishing formal ties would be a welcome, supportive gesture. In any case, we will continue to urge Macedonia to speak out publicly for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
End comment.

NAVRATIL